

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR FOX VALLEY WISCONSIN COUNTIES OCTOBER 2001



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Unemployment Rate Down In September

During September, unemployment rates in sixty-eight of the state's seventy-two counties declined, while rates in only two counties, Rock and Vilas, increased. Even in the face of a serious manufacturing slowdown, the state and region continue to experience low unemployment rates and overall job growth.

Wisconsin's unemployment rate, unadjusted, in September declined from 4.0 percent August to 3.4 percent. Thirty-four of the state's 72 counties had unemployment rates of 3.0 percent or lower during the month, and nine of the counties had rates of 2.5 percent or lower. The highest rate was in Menominee County, 9.2 percent, while the lowest rate was in Dane County, 1.6 percent. Twenty-two of the state's counties had unemployment rates lower than those of one year ago.

The unadjusted national rate of unemployment in September, at 4.7 percent, was down from 4.9 percent in August, but up from 3.8 percent one year ago. Seasonally adjusted, the nation's rate, at 4.9 percent in September, was unchanged over the month, while the state's adjusted rate, at 4.0 percent, was down from 4.3 percent in August, but up from 3.9 percent from one year ago.

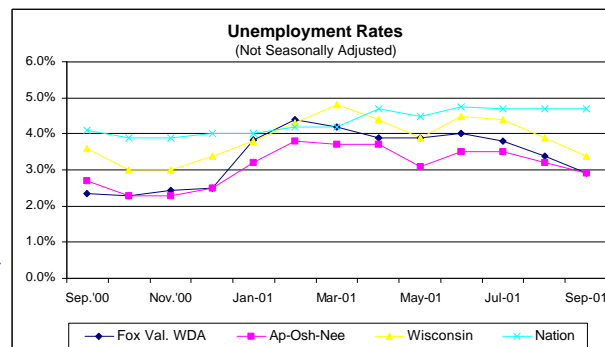
The seven county Fox valley Workforce Development Area (WDA) experienced 2.9 percent unemployment during September, which was a decline of 0.5 of a percentage point over the month. However, the September rate was up 0.6 of a percentage point from September of 2000. The annual increase is due primarily to the slowdown in manufacturing industries over the year. Between September of 2000 and September of 2001, the seven counties of the WDA saw a decline in manufacturing jobs that exceeded 1,200. During this same period, the statewide decline in manufacturing jobs exceeded 27,200.

In the Appleton/Oshkosh/Neenah metropolitan statistical area (MSA) portion of the WDA, the September unemployment rate was 2.9 percent, down 0.3 of a percentage point from August, but up 0.7 of a percentage point from one year ago. Among the seven counties of the WDA, the rates declined in every county between August and September. The lowest rate was found in Outagamie, 2.8 percent, an excep-

tionally low rate for this time of year even though it was up from a historic low of 2.1 percent one year ago. Winnebago and Waushara Counties tied for second lowest in the area with 2.9 percent each. The highest rate in the WDA was in Waupaca County, which recorded a 3.3 percent rate, up from 2.8 percent one year ago.

Nonfarm wage and salary jobs in the WDA numbered 286,854 in September, an increase of 93 over the month, but up 692 over the year. The loss of more than 1,200 manufacturing jobs over the year was offset, by increases in construction (up nearly 600), transportation and utilities (up over 700 for the year), retail trade (up nearly 500 for the year), and finance, Insurance and real estate, which grew by over 57 jobs over the year, and government, which was up 399 over the year. Total employment, which includes all nonfarm wage and salary jobs plus all self employment, declined by more than 5,500 jobs over the month. However, over the year, there was a net gain of more than 9,800 new jobs in our seven county WDA.

Unemployment was very low in the WDA for the month of September, and job growth during the month indicated the seasonal norm. This picture will begin to change significantly by the end of the year. The rate of unemployment will rise as manufacturing layoffs continue as a result of difficulties in the paper industry, as well as the ripple that will be felt in the economy from the events of September 11th.



The MSA portion of our seven county area continued to perform well over the month and over the year. The 2.9 percent rate of unemployment in the MSA for September was down from 3.2 percent in August, and was well below the national and state rates. Over the month, the impact of the manufacturing slowdown was felt as employment in that

sector declined by over 180 jobs in the three county MSA (the Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago County area). Over the year losses in manufacturing jobs numbered over 1,240 in the MSA.

The industrial "anchor" of the economy in the MSA is the paper industry, which In September employed 19,400 workers in the three county area, down from 19,700 a month ago. Manufacturing jobs declined in the area by over 1,300 over the year. This trend will continue as the result of the recent announced closing of Gilbert Paper Company and Rich

Products, two of our area's premier manufacturing sector employers.

While we are in an economic slowdown, it appears that consumer confidence is still high, and that will be a major factor in how soon the economic recovers. Inflation is still very low, and interest rates are favorable. It appears, based solely on observation of shopper traffic at the local retail centers in the valley, that people are indeed spending at a normal holiday season pace. While this may be good for the economy, one wonders

how much of retail spending is deficit spending. Credit appears to be easy to obtain from the credit card companies, but how far can the national debt go before it shakes the economy?

Employers in many sectors of the economy are citing the events of September 11th as a reason for slower projected growth in the coming year, as well as for lower pay increases. At this time it is still a bit early to gage the impact of those events on the local economy. For more labor statistics check our ever improving LMI web site: <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi>.

Sep-01	App/Osh/Neenah	Fond du Lac	Green Lake	Waupaca	Waushara	Region	Wisconsin
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	229,300	56,000	10,700	27,700	12,500	336,300	3,038,900
Employed	222,700	54,400	10,400	26,800	12,200	326,500	2,935,900
Unemployed	6,600	1,700	300	900	400	9,900	103,000
Unemployment rate(%)	2.9%	3.0%	3.1%	3.3%	2.9%	2.9%	3.4%
<b>Total, all industries**</b>	207,659	49,034	7,910	22,251	6,435	286,854	2,855,270
Construction & Mining	14,380	3,330	647	1,196	433	19,553	137,700
Manufacturing	59,253	12,849	1,670	6,532	804	80,304	591,096
Transportation & Public Utilities	10,228	1,878	310	615	313	13,031	136,700
Wholesale Trade	9,175	1,894	176	817	369	12,062	137,521
Retail Trade	35,339	9,133	1,579	4,410	1,474	50,461	502,157
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	9,013	1,654	230	664	224	11,561	152,461
Services	47,394	12,467	2,194	4,160	1,447	66,215	791,327
Government	22,877	5,829	1,104	3,857	1,371	33,667	406,308
<b>Change from previous month</b>							
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	-3,500	-1,100	-300	-200	-500	-5,500	-42,500
Employed	-2,700	-700	-100	-100	-200	-3,700	-23,700
Unemployed	-800	-400	-200	-100	-300	-1,800	-18,800
Unemployment rate(%)	-0.3%	-0.6%	-1.3%	-0.3%	-2.3%	-0.5%	-0.6%
<b>Total, all industries**</b>	-467	428	-65	197	-109	93	1,504
Construction & Mining	-84	-44	-35	-22	-28	-185	-2,559
Manufacturing	-186	-135	-17	-60	6	-398	-6,314
Transportation & Public Utilities	41	-2	5	11	6	55	2,219
Wholesale Trade	-155	-32	0	-4	-9	-191	-1,872
Retail Trade	241	-40	-60	-82	-44	59	-4,713
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	-112	-7	-6	6	-2	-119	-1,031
Services	-1,225	361	-71	-65	-42	-1,000	-9,507
Government	1,013	327	119	413	4	1,872	25,281
<b>Change from year ago</b>							
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	4,900	1,900	400	1,100	1,500	9,800	87,300
Employed	3,300	1,700	300	900	1,600	7,800	71,100
Unemployed	1,600	300	100	200	100	2,300	16,200
Unemployment rate(%)	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	-0.1%	0.6%	0.4%
<b>Total, all industries**</b>	-562	1,064	-96	286	620	692	-716
Construction & Mining	174	261	13	125	64	573	-1,365
Manufacturing	-1,243	60	-110	38	18	-1,255	-27,260
Transportation & Public Utilities	737	-2	-1	-21	29	714	674
Wholesale Trade	-103	62	-4	-22	117	-67	-2,046
Retail Trade	510	-24	-5	17	63	498	1,478
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	38	-11	14	16	3	57	3,224
Services	-820	574	7	13	69	-226	14,563
Government	145	144	-12	121	257	399	10,016

\* Includes participants residing in area. \*\* Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)

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